



## ***For Immediate Release***

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### **Town Begins Annual Mosquito Control Program** Public's Help Needed to Combat Mosquito Breeding Areas

(May 31, 2016) **East Hartford, CT** – Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc and Health Department Director Jim Cordier are requesting the cooperation of town residents to help control mosquito populations in East Hartford and reduce the possibility of a threat from diseases like West Nile and Zika Virus. The town has commenced its annual control campaign applying larvicide to known mosquito breeding grounds, and preparing for truck-mounted spraying in affected areas of town throughout the summer. Residents can help out by removing sources of standing or still water (prime mosquito breeding grounds) such as clogged gutters, tarps, tires, rain barrels, children's toys, lawn ornaments and flower pots. Residents should also take protective measures to reduce contact with mosquitos, such as reducing time spent outdoors at dawn and dusk in heavily infested areas, wearing long sleeves and pants and using insect repellants.

"Mosquitos come each year with spring, and while they are certainly annoying, they also bring the risk of disease," said Mayor Leclerc. "We believe that the risk to the State of Connecticut and East Hartford from mosquito-borne transmission of the Zika virus will be low, however we are taking proactive measures to ensure the safety of our residents. The Town of East Hartford has the most aggressive mosquito control program in our region, and we take strong steps to reduce mosquito populations and ensure the safety and comfort of our residents."

The Town of East Hartford treats major watercourses and wetlands in town that are prime breeding areas for mosquitos. The town also treats drainage catch basins and sprays in particularly infested areas of town. The Town **does not** have the resources to spray private property, and residents are asked to assist the Health Department by reducing mosquito breeding areas on their property. The Health Department asks all

residents to walk around their yard and check for standing water. Typical problem areas that collect water are clogged gutters, tarps, tires, rain barrels, children's toys, lawn ornaments and flower pots. As little as a teaspoon of water left standing for more than four days will allow mosquitoes to begin their breeding cycle. Residents should actively empty all standing water until the first killing frost.

If you own a pool that is not in operation or have standing water on your property that cannot be drained, you may purchase 'mosquito dunks' containing larvicide from the Health Department for \$5 for a pack of 12. In addition to reducing the number of mosquitoes by removing standing water, residents can avoid exposure to mosquitoes by limiting the time spent outside between one hour before and one hour after sunset.

Repellents are also recommended to avoid mosquito bites if you spend time outside in the evening. Consumer Reports recently compared mosquito and deer tick repellents and recommended several containing 15-30% DEET. A repellent containing oil of lemon eucalyptus and one with 20% picaridin as active ingredients were also recommended. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend use of repellents containing more than 30% DEET for children. It is unlikely to be beneficial for most residents to use DEET in concentrations above 30%.

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